

Implementation Plan for Recommendation I.B3.c. and I.B3.d., Promote sustainable development through smart housing siting: Develop recommended processes for balancing multiple public policy objectives affecting air quality and the permit processing and siting of transit-oriented development; Identify research needs and support research and demonstration efforts to mitigate adverse environmental and public health impacts in residential areas proximate to major urban roadways and transportation corridors.

Health in All Policies Task Force Implementation Plan

Housing Siting and Air Quality

Endorsed by the SGC on August 3, 2011

I. The Health in All Policies Task Force

The Health in All Policies (HiAP) Task Force is a multi-agency effort to improve state policy and decision-making by encouraging collaborative work towards health and sustainability goals by incorporating health considerations into non-health policy areas. After an in-depth process that included input from health and policy experts, the public, and extensive Task Force discussions, the Strategic Growth Council (SGC) approved eleven priority recommendations and charged the Task Force with developing implementation plans.

The HiAP Task Force is comprised of the following agencies, departments, and offices: Air Resources Board; Business, Transportation, and Housing Agency; Department of Community Services and Development; Department of Education; Department of Finance; Department of Food and Agriculture; Department of Forestry and Fire Protection; Department of Housing and Community Development; Department of Justice; Department of Parks and Recreation; Department of Social Services; Department of Transportation; Environmental Protection Agency; Governor's Office of Planning and Research; Health and Human Services Agency; Labor and Workforce Development Agency; Office of Gang and Youth Violence Policy; Office of Traffic Safety. In addition, the Task Force is staffed and facilitated by the California Department of Public Health.

II. Goals and Objectives

Goals

Aspirational Goal: Every California resident lives in safe, healthy, affordable housing.

The aspirational goal above provided the structure for the development of recommendations to promote healthy housing and make progress toward the State's health, sustainability, and climate change goals. Achievement of this goal will require efforts across California, both within and outside government, at the state, regional, and local levels, and over many years. This implementation plan represents a first step by the HiAP Task Force, outlining an initial set of activities to advance one of four recommendations that were made by the Task Force to advance this aspirational goal. This plan outlines activities over a 12-month duration to advance Recommendation I.B3.c. and I.B3.d., "Promote sustainable development through smart housing siting: Develop recommended processes for balancing multiple public policy objectives affecting air quality and the permit processing and siting of transit-oriented development; Identify research needs and support research and demonstration efforts

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to mitigate adverse environmental and public health impacts in residential areas proximate to major urban roadways and transportation corridors.” Implementation of this plan will involve a collaborative effort among housing, air quality, transportation, planning, and health agencies to examine existing guidance on siting housing near high-volume roadways. Although this implementation plan identifies activities over a 12-month period, the Task Force anticipates continuing its efforts to make progress towards the identified aspirational goal and its corresponding recommendations beyond the next 12 months. For more information on additional HiAP Task Force recommendations related to promoting healthy housing, please refer to the HiAP Task Force Report to the SGC.¹

Objectives

The following objectives will be pursued in order make progress on balancing multiple public policy objectives affecting air quality and the permit processing and siting of transit-oriented development (TOD) (I.B3.c.).

1. Convene stakeholders to discuss issues related to siting housing near high-volume roadways.
2. Clarify existing guidance on siting housing near high-volume roadways.

The Task Force will also identify research needs and support research and demonstration efforts to mitigate adverse environmental and public health impacts in residential areas proximate to major urban roadways and transportation corridors (I.B3.d.).

III. Rationale

The location of housing can affect public health in a number of ways, including, for example, through proximity to employment and service centers, enabling less driving and reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, preserving agricultural and forested lands, and enhancing environmental sustainability. The State has increasingly supported a host of policies encouraging greater proportions of infill, and transit-oriented residential development, for more compact development patterns. Such land use policies are among the strategies for implementation of SB 375. Additionally, housing location affects access to parks, recreation, grocery stores with healthy food, jobs, schools, and other community necessities. Housing located close to essential services and amenities, such as jobs, schools, parks, recreation, and grocery stores, encourages active transportation, which is beneficial for health outcomes and reduces GHG emissions. Further, when affordable

¹ Health in All Policies Task Force Report to the Strategic Growth Council, December 3, 2010. Available at http://www.sgc.ca.gov/hiap/docs/publications/HiAP_Task_Force_Report.pdf.

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housing is not available near jobs, people may have to commute long distances, generating high rates of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and GHG emissions.

Strategies that reduce sprawling development patterns and create compact communities will thus have a number of positive health and sustainability outcomes. While the benefits of infill and transit-oriented housing development have been identified, the potential adverse health impacts of roadway pollutants also merit careful consideration.

ARB's issuance in December 2005 of an advisory recommendation in its *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook* to "Avoid siting new sensitive land uses within 500 feet of a freeway, urban roads with 100,000 vehicles/day, or rural roads with 50,000 vehicles/day" has prompted consideration of public policies and regulations regarding the public health impacts of development proximate to freeways and busy roadways by a variety of entities, including local air districts and local governments.² Strategies for infill and transit-oriented development enabling lower rates of VMT and GHG emissions typically involve locations proximate to freeways and high-volume roadways. Studies indicate that residents of housing located in close proximity to busy roadways may suffer an increased risk of asthma symptoms and hospitalizations, children's medical visits, and cancer, and that particulate matter pollutant levels are elevated close to freeways and high-traffic roads.³

Such local policies, without corresponding mitigation or consideration of changes in emissions over time, may increasingly pose a constraint to implementation of infill development and transit-oriented housing development strategies, and therefore may limit the ability of these strategies to address other State laws (e.g., Housing Element law, Complete Streets) and policies to support the aforementioned public benefits of compact development. TOD is essentially dependent on development proximate to major urban roadways. Local regulations and permit processes restricting TOD proximate to major urban roadways, applied to individual projects, have the potential to conflict with long-term plans (e.g., Sustainable Community Strategies of regional transportation plans and integrated regional housing needs allocations) that direct new growth to transportation corridors. Therefore, the Task Force proposes to focus on the relationship between policies promoting development near transportation corridors, on the one hand, and policies intended to protect human health from emissions associated with such corridors, on the other, so that those policy goals can be harmonized in implementation.

² California Environmental Protection Agency and California Air Resources Board, *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: a Community Health Perspective* (April 2005), <http://www.arb.ca.gov/ch/handbook.pdf>.

³ Ibid.

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In addition to neighborhood and housing conditions, housing affordability significantly impacts health.⁴ Affordable housing can provide increased stability, which allows families more resources for other goods and services, health care needs, and basic necessities such as healthy food.⁵ While affordable housing has clear health benefits, often the sites available for affordable housing developments are near high-volume roadways like freeways because such land is less expensive. Therefore, while all types of housing are impacted by the siting concerns addressed herein, affordable housing is particularly impacted and warrants special focus.

Leaders in affordable housing, air quality, transit-oriented development, and public health are engaged in ongoing efforts to harmonize policies related to siting of housing, promotion of high-density development, and air quality. Stakeholders have suggested that the State has a role in providing guidance for local and regional entities and stakeholders and addressing these multiple public policy goals. These efforts have involved multiple state agencies working together to examine and clarify existing guidance related to siting of housing near freeways and busy roadways, with an aim to assist local and regional governments and other stakeholders in decision-making. HCD, Caltrans, ARB, CDPH, and OPR intend to work with stakeholders to pursue research, education, and demonstration efforts for mitigating the effects of pollution of major urban roadways and transportation corridors on nearby residential areas and transit-oriented housing development. The HiAP Task Force looks forward to supporting and enhancing this discussion.

IV. Resources

The Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) has been leading the Housing Siting and Air Quality Task Force, which is comprised of representatives from the Air Resources Board (ARB), Department of Transportation (Caltrans), Department of Public Health (CDPH), and Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR), with the intent to foster efforts to harmonize policy objectives involving housing proximate to major urban roadways affecting air quality and public health.

A roundtable discussion was co-hosted on April 11, 2011 by the Housing Siting and Air Quality Task Force, at the California Environmental Protection Agency in Sacramento. The roundtable included presentations from the five state Housing Siting and Air Quality Task Force agencies as well as representatives of air districts, regional and local governments, and housing and environmental advocates. Learning objectives were: a) To share information among state and local agencies about policies or regulations

⁴ Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, "Where We Live Matters for Our Health: The Links Between Housing and Health," *Issue Brief 2* (September 2008).

⁵ LM Anderson, JS Charles, MT Fullilove, SC Scrimshaw, JE Fielding, and J Normand, "Providing Affordable Family Housing and Reducing Residential Segregation by Income: A Systematic Review," *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 24, no 3S (The Task Force on Community Preventive Services, 2003): 47-67.

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which affect objectives related to siting of housing and air quality affecting public health, and b) To set the stage for identifying proactive strategies and actions for interagency collaboration to develop and promote higher density infill and transit-oriented housing development while protecting public health. Building off of the momentum from this initial effort, the Housing Siting and Air Quality Task Force agencies will provide implementation plan support in the form of staff time.

V. Workplan Narrative

Action Step 1: Host and Participate in Housing Siting and Air Quality Task Force Meetings

The Housing Siting and Air Quality Task Force, led by HCD, has scheduled bi-weekly meetings to plan a fall 2011 workshop in Los Angeles. The workshop would be a modified version of the April 11th Housing Siting and Air Quality roundtable, and involve use of case examples where housing, transportation, and air quality policies compete. The workshop would also include stakeholder involvement in consideration of mitigation options. HCD staff will be responsible for providing agendas and facilitating meetings.

Action Step 2: Convene a Housing Siting and Air Quality Workshop for Los Angeles

Staff from Los Angeles County, who presented at the April roundtable, identified a need for a similar discussion to be held with Southern California stakeholders, and requested that the State provide a similar effort in the Los Angeles area. The Housing Siting and Air Quality Task Force is working with the County of Los Angeles Regional Planning Department and other stakeholders to plan a Los Angeles workshop, tentatively scheduled for October or November.

Action Step 3: Clarify Existing Housing Siting and Air Quality Information; Seek and Promote Mitigation Research

Following input from the Los Angeles workshop and other pending related forums and activities of stakeholders related to these issues, the Housing Siting and Air Quality Task Force will consider developing jointly-issued “guidance on the guidance (of individual agencies).” This effort will provide a framework for synthesizing available information and outline processes for local agencies and other stakeholders to consider employing in planning infill and transit-oriented housing development, in order to address health, transportation, and air quality concerns of housing proximate to major urban roadways. This document could identify research needs and potentially inform state-supported mitigation strategy options and approaches. The guidance will support balancing health, transportation, and air quality issues in the planning stage in order to avoid having to address them on a project-by-project basis. The Attorney General’s office will be consulted and may be able to provide support on related legal issues.

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VI. Workplan Summary

Duration: 12 Months

Note: HCD staff will have lead responsibility for major Action Steps. HiAP staff (CDPH) will support HCD, and additional agencies will have responsibilities outlined in detail in the preceding narrative. As appropriate, Caltrans, ARB, and OPR will be active partners in the implementation of the Action Steps.

Aspirational Goal: Every California resident lives in safe, healthy, affordable housing.				
Recommendation: Promote sustainable development through smart housing siting: Develop recommended processes for balancing multiple public policy objectives affecting air quality and the permit processing and siting of transit oriented development; Identify research needs and support research and demonstration efforts to mitigate adverse environmental and public health impacts in residential areas proximate to major urban roadways and transportation corridors.				
Action Step		Participating / Supporting Agency(ies)	Deliverable	Timeline
Objective 1. Convene stakeholders to discuss issues related to siting housing near high-volume roadways.				
1	Host and participate in Housing Siting and Air Quality Task Force meetings.	HCD, CDPH, Caltrans, ARB, OPR	1) Agenda and speakers for a fall Los Angeles Housing Siting and Air Quality Workshop 2) Case examples 3) Prospective mitigation research opportunities	July 2011 - November 2011
2	Convene a Los Angeles Housing Siting and Air Quality workshop.	HCD, CDPH, Caltrans, ARB, OPR	Los Angeles Housing Siting and Air Quality workshop	October 2011 - November 2011
Objective 2. Clarify existing guidance on siting housing near high-volume roadways.				
3	Clarify existing housing siting and air quality guidance; seek and promote mitigation research.	HCD, CDPH, Caltrans, ARB, OPR	Written document(s) clarifying guidance and identifying research needs	November 2011 - Summer 2012

ARB: Air Resources Board, Caltrans: Department of Transportation, CDPH: Department of Public Health, HCD: Department of Housing and Community Development, OPR: Governor's Office of Planning and Research

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VII. Cross Cutting Themes

A. Interagency Collaboration

Collaboration is central to achieving the goals outlined in this plan. Interagency collaboration among HCD, ARB, OPR, Caltrans, and CDPH is necessary to reconcile competing policy priorities around density, air quality, affordable infill housing, and TOD. A primary focus of this effort has been to identify proactive strategies and actions for interagency collaboration to develop and promote higher density infill and transit-oriented housing development while protecting public health. Continuing this work can further strengthen the initial collaboration and serve as an example to other agencies looking to do similar work.

B. Equity

By advancing efforts to reconcile housing location and affordability to protect health, this effort will advance housing and health equity.

C. Community Engagement

Community engagement is a cornerstone of this effort, and this collaboration has already engaged many affected stakeholders including state agencies, local Air Quality Management Districts, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, regional planning departments, local housing agencies, and advocacy groups representing environmental health, fair housing, and building interests in the initial (April 11, 2011) roundtable. Diverse stakeholder engagement will also be a priority at the fall Los Angeles workshop.

D. Data

This project will provide important information for local and state agencies, including case examples of existing models and information about promising policies and practices.

VIII. Evaluation

Continued monitoring of the implementation of planned activities will be an indicator of the progress that has been made.

IX. Contact

To learn more about the Health in All Policies Task Force, visit www.sgc.ca.gov/hiap/ or e-mail HiAP@cdph.ca.gov.